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STORIES OF POLAND.

BY ROBIN CARVER.



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TO MY YOUNG READERS.

YOU are desirous to learn about the history of Poland, because it is the history of a brave, though an unfortunate, people. It is a people now fallen but not dishonoured, scattered but not destroyed, chained but not crushed. We may yet see them a free and happy nation.

ROBIN CARVER.

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STORIES OF POLAND.

STORIES OF POLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Description of Poland.—Warsaw.—Its inhabitants.—Trade.—Ride about the Country.—Peasants.—Costumes.

THE Poles are a very brave people, and as all my little friends know, have been fighting bravely for their liberties. The Russians are strong and tyrannical, and for a great many years have been able to govern the Poles, and treat them as cruelly as they pleased. I have been in Poland, and am going to tell you all about the country, and the people who live in it. I know that there is not a nation in the world, you want to hear about so much.

Take the map and look at Poland. You see it is a very small country by the side of its huge

neighbor, Russia, and that though a very brave nation, its inhabitants are a mere handful compared with the Northern barbarians. The word Poland means 'a flat land.' It is so called, because there is hardly a hill or a mountain through the whole of it, except upon the borders.

The capital of Poland is a very famous city called Warsaw, situated upon the river Vistula. A few years ago there were a great many thousand people living there, from all countries. When you walked along the streets, you would meet Jews with hanging grey beards, Turks in their robes and turbans, polite Frenchmen just from Paris, and savage looking Russian soldiers, passing to and fro in all directions.

Once in a while, you would see the true old Polish nobleman, with moustaches, girdle, sabre and red or yellow boots. Here you would see a small party of nuns, with long veils, walking by themselves ; and there some young ladies, in

bright silk mantles, talking and tripping through the public squares.

There are four thousand houses in Warsaw, and about a thousand of them are thatched with straw. The palaces are very splendid, and ornamented in the finest Italian style. They are built side by side with miserable wooden huts, which look as if they were going to tumble over the heads, of the poor people who live in them. Where there are a great many palaces, there is always a great deal of wretchedness.

Warsaw has been from an early age quite a trading city, and it still retains some of its large business. The principal articles of manufacture are cloth, linen, carpets, stockings and carriages. Twice a year they have a great fair here, when the city is filled with merchants from the most distant parts of the kingdom, and from foreign countries.

As they made very fine carriages at Warsaw,

I bought a cheap one and rode over the country. It was varied with fruitful fields, heaths, dark woods, marshes and moors. Sometimes I found myself upon an open place, without a single tree or house to be seen, any where around. Soon, however, the borders of some dark forest would appear before me, and I would ride for eight or ten miles, with nothing in view but trees and shrubbery.

Once in a while, in the midst of a forest, I would meet a little spot of ground, of twenty or thirty acres, cleared up and cultivated, prettily fenced in by the borders of the green woods. Here and there is a little lake, ornamented in a similar manner, and fringed about with overhanging trees. These are some of the prettiest scenes in Poland.

The country is generally cultivated by poor peasants, who live with their cattle in wooden huts, consisting of one room, with a stove, and

covered with thatch or shingles. Their common food is cabbage, potatoes, sometimes pease, black bread, and gruel, without butter or meat. Their chief drink is water, which they are very fond of mixing with whiskey. They have little furniture or clothing. They keep about twenty holidays in the year, besides the Sundays, and pass much of their time in telling beads, and making pilgrimages.

These peasants are chiefly occupied in raising corn, hemp and flax, and in taking care of cattle. Poland might be made to supply all Europe with grain. But they have very wretched instruments of husbandry, and know nothing about the proper cultivation of the soil. The sheep are very poor, and the cows are small, badly kept, and yield very little butter and no good cheese.

The summer dress of the peasants consists of a shirt and drawers of coarse linen, and round

caps or hats, without shoes or stockings. In winter they wear sheep skins, with the wool inwards. Their boots are of the rinds of trees, wrapped about the legs, with the thicker parts to guard the soles of their feet. The women of the poorer class wear upon their heads a wrapper of white linen, under which the hair is braided, and hangs down to the middle.

The men of all ranks generally wear whiskers, and shave their heads, leaving only a circle of hair upon the crown. The dress of the higher orders, both of men and women, is extremely elegant. That of the gentlemen is a waistcoat without sleeves, with an upper robe of a different colour, reaching below the knee, and fastened round the waist with a sash or girdle.

The sleeves are, in warm weather, tied behind the shoulders. In summer, the robe is of silk; in winter of cloth, velvet, or stuff edged with fur. A sabre is the mark of nobility. Fur

caps and bonnets are much worn, and buskins of yellow leather, the heels of which are plaited with iron or steel. The dress of the ladies is a simple long robe edged with fur.

CHAPTER II.

Exercises and amusements.—Houses.—The nobility.—An entertainment.—Animals.—The Elk.—The Bohac.—The Titmouse.—Grottoes.—The Jews.

I HAVE told you what I saw of the dresses of the Poles, and I will now tell you something about their persons and manners. They are usually of fair complexion, and, in their bodies, are well shaped, and well proportioned.

They are fond of all sorts of manly exercises and amusements; such as riding, hunting, skating, and baiting bulls and bears. They are very fond of travelling on horseback. A Polish gentleman, who can afford to keep his horse, will not go an hundred yards without one. They are so hardy that they will sleep upon the ground, in frost or snow, without any bed or covering.

The Poles never lie above stairs, and their apartments are all separate. The kitchen is on

one side, the stable on another, the dwelling house behind, and the gate in front. They content themselves with a few small beds, and it is said that, when a stranger lodges at their houses, he must carry his bedding with him. I was frequently invited, however, to spend the night at houses in which I met very kind people, who always had a bed of their own to spare for me.

The nobility sometimes had great dinners and suppers, where they were entertained with trumpets and other music, and were waited upon at table by a large number of gentlemen. The noble families in Poland were said to amount to sixty thousand. Of these a great many are very poor indeed, and are obliged to be servants to the rich.

At an entertainment, the Poles lay neither knives, forks nor spoons, but every guest brings them with him. A nobleman usually gives his servant a piece of meat, which he eats standing

behind his master's chair, and then drinks out of the same cup with him. Bumpers, or full glasses emptied at one time, are much in fashion at these feasts.

I very often saw the lady of a Polish grandee, besides a coach and six with a great number of servants, attended by an old gentleman usher, an old woman for her governess, and a dwarf of each sex to hold up the back part of her gown, which is made very long and called a train. At night, her coach is always surrounded by a great number of torches or flambeaux.

I am now going to tell you about the animals of Poland. In the forest of Warsovia there are a great many buffaloes, wolves, boars, deer, wild horses and wild oxen. There is also a kind of wolf resembling a hart, with spots on his belly and legs, and with very fine fur, which is the best in the country.

The elk is also found there. This animal has

a body like a deer, only thicker and longer. It has high legs, feet broad and cloven, large, rough and broad hams, like those of a wild goat. Upon dissecting an elk, large flies were found in its head, which had eaten away its brains. In the forests of the North of Europe, the elks are attacked in this manner, and from their weakness fall an easy prey to the hunter. The flesh of the elk is considered a very great luxury.

Another animal of Poland is the bohac, which seems to be of the beaver kind, and is something like a guinea-pig, which perhaps you have seen. These fellows dig holes in the ground, which they enter in October, and do not leave again, except once in a while for food, till April. They have separate apartments for their provisions and lodgings, and lie together in herds of ten or twelve.

I never saw a quail in Poland, near enough to examine it. This bird here, however, is said to

have green legs and to be unwholesome. The titmouse is often found here, and its nest is quite a curiosity. It is made long, and hangs down like a purse.

The head of this bird is of a pale, bluish ash-colour, the fore part of the neck and the breast tinged with red, the belly white, wings black, tail rust-coloured. The male is known from the female, by a pair of black pointed whiskers.

The nest is in the shape of a long purse, as I have before told you. It is formed by weaving together down and gossamer, in a snug manner, and lining the inside with down, so as to make a warm place for its young. The entrance is at the side, and is small and round.

This nest is carefully hung from the extremity of the slender twig of a willow, or some other tree, over a river. It is very curious, as you see from the plate.

Under the mountains adjoining Kiow, in the

deserts of Podolia, there are several grottoes, where a great number of human bodies have been preserved, though buried a vast number of years ago. They are neither so hard nor so black, as the mummies that have been found in Egypt. Among them are two princes, in the habits they used to wear. It is thought that these bodies have been preserved by the nature of the soil, which is dry and sandy.

I must tell you a word or two about the Jews. There are a very great number of them in Poland, and they were for ages the only persons who were engaged in trading to foreign countries. Almost all the money in the kingdom was in their hands, and for a great many years there was very seldom a theft or a law-suit, in which a Jew was not one of the parties concerned.

CHAPTER III.

Cracow.—Old palace.—Cathedral.—Burial of a king.—Monuments.—Charles XII. at the tomb of Sobieski.—Sobieski.—His battles with the Turks.—Made king.—Defeat of the Turks.—Siege of Trembowla.—Sobieski raises the siege.

I AM now going to tell you about the city of Cracow. It was once the capital city of Poland, and the place where her kings were crowned. It is built on a large plain, watered by the river Vistula. There are seventy churches and chapels in this city, besides several magnificent convents, and a celebrated cathedral.

On the top of a high rock in the southern part of the town, is a palace or castle, surrounded with brick walls and old towers. The remains consist of a few rooms, which are left in about the same state, in which they were more than an hundred years ago. In one of these rooms is an old picture of a coronation, or

the ceremony of crowning the king, but there is no furniture in any of them.

I have told you there was a famous cathedral at Cracow. A cathedral is a church over which a bishop is placed. This one has a great many altars, and twenty chapels. Most all of the kings of Poland are buried here. The Polish laws were very singular in this respect.

When a king died, his body was carried to Warsaw. It remained there till a new king was chosen, and it was then conducted in great pomp to Cracow. Two days before the coronation, the new king, attended by his officers of state, joined the funeral procession, and followed the body to the church of Saint Stanislaus. The burial service was there performed, and the remains were placed in the cathedral, adjoining the palace.

The tombs and monuments, erected for the kings of Poland, are not remarkably magnificent.

Their figures are carved in marble, of indifferent workmanship, and some are without any inscriptions.

When the celebrated king of Sweden, Charles XII, entered Cracow, he visited these tombs. On approaching the remains of John Sobieski, he is said to have hung with reverence over his tomb, and to have exclaimed—"What a pity that so great a man should ever die!"

Sobieski was a famous general under a monk, by the name of Michael, who had been raised to the throne by the cunning of a party, even against his own will. It is not often that we find a man wise enough to refuse a throne, but Michael seems to have been a weak rather than a wise man.

Under such a king, Sobieski of course possessed all the power of the throne. His death soon gave him full enjoyment of it. This happened when he had gone out to fight the Turks, and on the very eve of a great battle.

Sobieski saw the immense camp of the Turks, lying on the plains before them, gleaming with the crescents and banners, and shining with silk and gold. "My comrades," said he, "in half an hour we shall lodge under those gilded tents." The attack was commenced with great fury, and Sobieski kept his word.

His friends now exerted themselves, on the death of the king, to have him chosen in his place. They succeeded, and Sobieski was elected King of Poland, on the nineteenth of May, 1674.

Sobieski had first studied the art of war in France, where he was sent with his brother in early youth. "My children," said their father at parting, "apply yourselves in France only to the useful arts; as to dancing, you can learn that among the Tartars." You see how much he profited by his father's advice.

Before he was crowned, Sobieski continued

the war against the Turks. His uncle and brother had been slain by these enemies, and he wished to revenge their death. After various little encounters, the Polish troops came to a final battle with the Turks and Tartars, near a town called Leopold, in Galicia.

It was in the month of August. Before the battle a very remarkable circumstance occurred. Notwithstanding the season of the year, there was a very heavy fall of snow, which fortunately was a great inconvenience to the enemy. The Poles exclaimed, 'a miracle!' They fought, with a firm belief that they should conquer, with great courage and fury. Ten thousand Turks are said to have been left dead upon the field of battle.

The enemy fled in great haste, running in one night as far as they had marched in three days before. In the course of their retreat, they thought it would be a good thing to stop and take possession of a fortified town.

The vizier, a chief officer of the Turks, accordingly sent word to the governor of a little town called Trembowla, that to avoid further trouble he had better open his gates and let the Turks walk in quietly.

The governor sent back a very brave answer: "Thou art mistaken if thou expectest to find gold within these walls. We have nothing here but steel and soldiers. Our number indeed is small, but our courage is great."

The Turkish general then ordered his soldiers to fire all their cannon against the walls and beat them down. But it was all in vain. The governor was determined to hold out.

This may have been partly owing to his wife, who was a very brave woman, and seems to have frightened her husband a great deal more than the enemy did. When the cannon were raging at the utmost, she seized two daggers, and said to her husband, "One of these is for

thee, if thou surrenderest this town; the other I intend for myself."

The affectionate wife however was relieved from this necessity. Sobieski seemed always to know when the Turks wanted to be beaten, and appeared in sight just as the town would otherwise have been obliged to give up the day. He immediately fought the enemy, slew several thousand of them, and obliged the remainder to retreat.

CHAPTER IV.

Sobieski.—His wars with the Turks.—Troubles with his wife.—The Tartars besiege Vienna.

THE next year Sobieski was again obliged to go and fight the Turks and Tartars. The army of the enemy was five or six times larger than his own, and amounted to about two hundred thousand men.

The two armies met in a little town, called Zurano. A river separated the two encampments. Sobieski thought if peace could be made without bloodshed, it would be the wisest plan of settling their difficulties. So he sent one of his officers, to tell the cham that he thought they had better make peace.

The cham of Tartary is a very great person, and received the officer with a good deal of pomp and parade. The Pole, however, was

brave, and felt that his king was full as great a man as the cham.

“What brought me here,” said the officer to the cham, “is the love of peace, which you yourselves need. We do not bring prayers or promises. If words will not make peace, our swords shall.” Saying these words, he drew his sword half out of its sheath. This startled the cham and provoked him very much; so he sent the officer away.

The Turks now attempted to pass the river, but were driven back with great slaughter. So the vizier, whose name was Ibrahim, thought he had better trouble the enemy from a distance, instead of coming too near. He began to dig trenches, and to open all his artillery upon the Polish camp.

Sobieski was at this time seated at his table, thinking how and where he had better give the enemy battle, when a cannon ball passed di-

rectly through his tent. He fortunately escaped without injury. His officers instantly urged him to retire to a place of greater safety; but he was determined to show his soldiers that they were exposed to no more danger than their general.

The vizier still remembered the terrible havoc that Sobieski had made among the Turkish forces, and began to think he had better make peace. He sent deputies to propose it to the Polish general. They found him in his tent, but did not make any offers that would satisfy him.

There were only provisions for four days in the Polish camp, and it was necessary to fight or retreat, to avoid being starved. Sobieski determined to attack the enemy on the following morning. He knew that his troops were a mere handful, compared with the huge armies of the Turks and Tartars, but he was willing to try the odds of the battle.

On the following day, however, Ibrahim was willing to make a much better bargain about peace than ever. There was trouble and quarrelling in his camp on all sides. The Tartars were tired of the war and threatened to go home. So he made very good offers and Sobieski accepted them.

Though Sobieski managed so well with the Turks, he never learned the art of managing his wife. She was very troublesome, and ruled him as she pleased. She was always present at the debates of the government, in a private place, where she could hear every thing that was going on, without being seen.

One day she had a matter before the diet, or the chief assembly of Polish rulers, about the increase of her yearly allowance of money. The king wished to delay it till another time, for the assembly were not in very good humour, and he was afraid they might refuse it. The queen

then sent an express message, telling him that she could not be put off.

The king was very angry, though he was obliged to obey. He was the more willing to do this, as he felt certain the queen's request would be refused. In this, however, he was mistaken. The queen managed the assembly as well as her husband, and prevailed upon them to give her as much money as she wanted.

Sobieski had long wished to have another war with the Turks. This nation at length quarrelled with Leopold, the emperor of Germany, and in this manner a convenient opportunity offered itself.

Leopold wished very much to have Sobieski assist him. He knew the Turks had been beaten so often by him, that his name was terrible to them. Leopold agreed to give up some fine salt mines, and a very large sum of money to pay the expenses of the war. Sobieski promis-

ed that he would have fifty thousand men, ready to assist Leopold, whenever he should be called upon.

In the beginning of May, 1683, the Turkish army set out upon their march. They were in all three hundred thousand men; about two thirds of them were Hungarians and Tartars. Their general was Kara Mustapha, the grand vizier.

Leopold behaved very shamefully. The vizier marched along very quietly to Vienna. Leopold ran away before the Tartars from town to town, without risking a hair of his head in defence of his subjects. To add to his troubles, the queen was with him; and during the flight they were sometimes obliged to sleep in a wood on a bundle of straw.

The vizier pitched his camp on a large plain on the south of the great city of Vienna. This plain was about nine miles long, and the camp

was so large that it nearly covered the whole of it.

There were about eleven thousand soldiers in Vienna, commanded by Count Starembourg. Besides these, the citizens and students were armed. But the Turks were so numerous, and fought with so much vigour and fury, that the inhabitants began to despair.

They sent red hot balls into the city, which set it on fire in many places, and destroyed a great many lives. Beside all this, there was a report that some traitors in the city were making an entrance, under ground, for the enemy. It was all confusion and fear. The Turks were quite sure of victory, and would have gained it, if it had not been for their old enemy, John Sobieski.

CHAPTER V.

Sobieski marches to Vienna.—Views the Turkish camp.—Disturbs the vizier at his cup of coffee.—The vizier and the cham.—Defeat.—Sobieski enters Vienna in triumph.

SOBIESKI could only raise an army of about twenty-four thousand men, but he thought a good deal might be done even with so small a number. He immediately set out for Vienna. The queen went with him to the borders of Poland, and there left him.

Though she used to govern him, we can see how much he loved her, from a letter he wrote the day after their parting. It began "Only joy of my soul, charming and beloved Mariette!"

Sobieski was now fifty-four years of age, and so weak as to be obliged to be lifted on his horse. Yet he was the only man in the nation who could beat the Turks. While on the march with his little army, he saw an eagle flying by

them on the right. He pointed it out to his soldiers, as a sign of victory.

Vienna was now in a very wretched condition. The soldiers were killed, or died of sickness, in great numbers every day. The governor had said that he would not surrender the place but with the last drop of his blood, but he began to despair of holding out any longer. A letter, which he wrote at this time to his friends who had promised to assist him, contained only these words: "No more time to lose, no more time to lose."

Sobieski at length reached the last mountain which separated him from the Turks. He stood on the top of it, and looked down upon the immense plain where they were encamped.

There were thousands of splendid tents, with banners and crescents, so beautiful as to seem pitched rather for some festival than for war. The Tartars were scattered about in swarms at

the foot of the mountain, moving in great confusion. The Turks, with their turbans and scimitars, appeared almost countless. Beside all these, there were great numbers of horses, camels and buffaloes in every direction.

Sobieski looked upon this scene for a few moments in silence. At length his eye sparkled with joy, and he exclaimed: "This man is badly encamped; he knows nothing of war; we shall certainly beat him."

The length of the war, sickness, and a fear of ill fortune, had produced great trouble in the Turkish army. The bravest of the troops began to murmur against their general's cowardice. "Come on, infidels," they exclaimed, "the sight of a hat will put us to flight."

Sunday, the twelfth of September, 1683, was the great day to decide what was to become of Vienna. There were small parties fighting on both sides from an early hour in the day. Kara

Mustapha took his place in the centre of the Turkish army, and Sobieski in that of Poland and Germany.

It was now about five in the evening, and the battle had only been begun. The vizier was quietly seated in a splendid crimson tent, sipping coffee. I hardly think he would have sipped his coffee quite so much at his ease, if he had known how near Sobieski was to him.

There was a high hill just overlooking the vizier's tent, which Sobieski ordered his soldiers to seize. They immediately obeyed his command, and, with very little ceremony, disturbed Kara Mustapha at his cup of coffee.

Sobieski, at the head of his troops, instantly plunged forward to reach the vizier's tent. The enemy knew him at once by the streamers which his guard wore upon their lances. "By allah!" exclaimed the cham of the Tartars, "the king is with them!"

An eclipse of the moon happened just at this time to add to the terror of the Turks. They fled in all directions. The vizier in vain tried to encourage them.

He had almost given up the attempt, when the cham of the Tartars fled by him among the crowd of runaways. "And you," said the vizier to him, "cannot you help me?" "I know the king of Poland!" said the cham. "I told you that if we had to deal with him all we could do would be to run away."

By six o'clock, Sobieski took possession of their magnificent tents. A very beautiful stirrup belonging to the vizier was brought to him. "Take this stirrup," said he, "to the queen, and tell her that the person to whom it belonged is defeated." They all slept that night in the Turkish camp.

On the following day Sobieski made his entrance into Vienna. The Turks had battered

down part of the wall, through which they expected to enter the town. But instead of entering Vienna, they were now scattered all over the country.

This passage was now used for the entrance of the victorious army. The inhabitants gathered in crowds to gaze upon their great deliverer, and heap blessings upon his head. They wept and shouted for joy.

“Never,” said Sobieski, “did the crown yield me pleasure like this !”

CHAPTER VI.

About the salt mines.—Different kinds of salt.—Chapels of salt.—Palace of Casimir the Great.

IN the cathedral at Cracow, there are the tombs of a great many other famous warriors. But I am afraid you are tired of hearing about battles, and so I will tell you about something else. I rather think you would like to hear about the salt mines.

These are in a little town with a hard name. A great many of the Polish towns, as well as many of the Polish people, have names that sound very hard to Americans. The village, where the salt mines are, is called Wielitska.

I visited the mines with two companions. We fastened three hammocks to the rope which they use to draw up the salt, and were let down gently into the earth about one hundred and sixty yards.

We then left our hammocks and passed through a long descending passage, sometimes through broad galleries, wide enough for several carriages to go abreast. We sometimes went down steps cut in the solid rock, which were splendid enough to be the stair-case of a palace.

Each of us carried a light, and several guides went before us with lamps, to show the way. The glitter of all these from the sides of the mine was very beautiful.

The salt is called green salt, though it is of an iron grey colour. Being almost as hard as stone, the miners cut it with hatchets and pick-axes into very large blocks. Some of these weigh six or seven hundred pounds.

The large masses are raised by a windlass, such as you sometimes see in our stores, only larger and stronger. The smaller pieces are carried by horses, through a winding gallery which leads to the surface of the earth.

Besides the grey salt, the miners sometimes find little pieces perfectly white, and transparent as crystal. They sometimes find pieces of coal buried in the salt.

One of our guides pointed out to us, what my little readers will certainly call a great curiosity. If they do not, they will differ very much from me.

From this solid salt, several beautiful chapels have been cut, in which religious services are performed on certain days. One of these chapels is thirty feet long and twenty-five feet broad. The altar, the cross, the church ornaments, and the statues of the saints, are all carved out of salt.

Many of the chambers cut in salt are very large. The roofs of these chambers are flat, and supported sometimes on pillars of wood, sometimes of salt.

The large galleries, with the chapels and a

few sheds for horses, have probably led travellers to suppose and tell that these mines contained several villages, inhabited by families of miners who never see the light.

There is room enough for them to live in this manner, but the miners have no dwelling-houses under ground, as they do not remain below more than eight hours at a time. We found these mines without damp or moisture, and noticed, in our whole passage, only one small spring of water. You may well suppose that this spring was rather salt. These mines have been worked above six hundred years.

In returning from the mines to Cracow, we stopped to examine an old building in the neighbourhood of the town. It is called the palace of Casimir the Great. On a side wall in an inner court of this palace, I observed the white eagle of Poland carved in stone, and around it an inscription from which I could only make out the date—1367.

Several marble columns were scattered about, which shew that the building had once been very magnificent. Part of it was evidently very old, while a part had certainly been added quite lately.

This palace was the principal residence of Casimir. In the garden, is the tomb of a lady, who was a favourite of this king, and known by the name of Esther the fair Jewess.

It was said to have been owing to her, that the Jews received so many favours in Poland, which is called the Paradise of the Jews. It may have been partly owing to this lady, but it was also partly owing to their being at that time very rich.

Kings always want to borrow money, and are willing to show great favours to those who will furnish it to them.

CHAPTER VII.

A splendid entertainment.—Villa near Warsaw.—Gardens.—A Turkish tent.—An illuminated bridge.—A pavilion.—Music and dancing.

I AM a very quiet person, and never dined with a king or any of a king's relations. But as my little friends may like to know something about the manner in which the Polish nobility used to amuse their friends, I have borrowed a little story from an Englishman who travelled in Poland a great many years ago.

He was invited by the princess Zartoriska to a little party at a villa, or country seat, about three miles from Warsaw. It was a very pretty place in the midst of a forest. The grounds about were quite level, with open plains of grass, and little groves, all watered with clear streams of crystal waters.

The house was built upon a low hill, and was very much like the common cottages of the peasants. It was of trunks of trees piled upon each other, and thatched with straw. Besides the principal building, there were separate cottages for the children and attendants.

Other buildings, such as summer houses, pavilions, rustic sheds and ruins, were scattered throughout the grounds. The stables were in the shape of a half circle. Several bridges were built over the little streams, rudely formed of the trunks and bent branches of trees.

On his arrival, the traveller, Mr. Coxe, went to the principal cottage, where the princess was ready to receive him. He was surprised to find the furniture of this cottage very beautiful and costly.

The bathing room was fitted up with great elegance. The sides were covered with square pieces of Dresden porcelain, which is very ex-

pensive ; and the border and ceiling were beautifully painted.

Having been through all the rooms in the cottage, the company went into a little garden near the house, that was surrounded with blocks of granite and fallen trees. Here they drank tea, and afterwards walked round among the cottages of the children.

After walking round the grounds, the company visited a Turkish tent of very rich and curious workmanship, that had been pitched in a field at a short distance from the cottage. This tent had been taken from the Turks in battle.

Within the tent there was a settee, and a carpet upon the ground. Here they remained conversing till about dusk, when the princess proposed returning.

She led them through the house to a small hill, where they were suddenly surprised with a

beautiful illumination. A little bridge, of a single arch, thrown over a broad sheet of water, was shining with several thousand lamps of different colours. It looked like a brilliant circle hung in the air.

While stopping to admire this beautiful scene, a band of music struck up at a little distance, and amused them with an excellent concert.

They were led from this spot across the illuminated bridge, to a thatched pavilion, open at the sides, and supported by pillars hung round with garlands of flowers. Here they found a very pleasant table, covered with all sorts of delicate fruits and rich wines.

The evening was very pleasant, the air was mild, and the moon had now just risen to add to the beauties of the scene. The company were in excellent spirits, for with such delightful music, and such pleasant entertainment, it was impossible for any one to be sad.

This they supposed was the closing scene. But even here they were still once more to be agreeably surprised. They rose from the table to walk out. The gardens were instantly illuminated.

They now strayed about in all directions, as they pleased. Instruments were placed about in different spots, on which the wind, as it whistled through them, made beautiful music. In this manner two or three hours were spent very pleasantly.

They now again passed over the bridge and returned into the cottage. Here the two eldest daughters of the princess, dressed in Grecian robes, went very gracefully through a Polish and Cossac dance. The first was quite serious, and the last was lively.

The eldest son, a boy about eight years of age, then performed a hornpipe, and afterwards a dance, in the style of the Polish peasants. It

was now past two in the morning—a time when all honest people ought to be snug in their beds.

The company, however, were very sorry to separate, even at this late hour. Though most of them had never met before, they had been so much pleased as to have become quite as good friends as if they had known each other a great while.

Mr. Coxe thought he had never passed so delightful an evening in all his life. I think it must have been very pleasant, and I believe all my little readers think so too. However, I hope they will never sit up till two o'clock in the morning, even if they should go to a foreign country, and visit a princess.

CHAPTER VIII.

Story of Stanislas Leczinski.

I AM now going to tell you about the fortune and adventures of Stanislas Leczinski. This man was chosen king after the death of the famous Sobieski. It was almost entirely through the influence of the celebrated king of Sweden, Charles the Twelfth.

He was no sooner seated on his throne at Warsaw, than there was a general alarm throughout the country. There was another man, by the name of Augustus, who thought he had a better right to be king than Stanislas.

This man was elector, or chief officer, of a country called Saxony, and he immediately set out for Warsaw with an army of twenty thousand men. This city was at that time without

any soldiers or fortifications. Stanislas was therefore obliged to flee.

He went at once to his friend Charles. Augustus was a good soldier, but this king was a better one. He drove him back into Saxony, and made him give up all his pretensions to be king of Poland.

After this was settled, Augustus and Charles had a private meeting. The Swedish king was in his military uniform, a coarse blue coat with gilt buttons, and jack boots.

These two great characters seem to have had very little to say for themselves. Charles was usually very silent, and all he had to tell Augustus was about his jack boots. He assured him that these had never been off his legs for six years, except when he lay down.

This was the most important subject of conversation. After paying the usual compliments, the two kings parted, and were very glad to get rid of each other.

Charles was afterwards beaten in a great battle with the Russians, and obliged to fly to Turkey for safety. Augustus immediately returned to Poland, and again took the crown.

Stanislas was willing to give it up peaceably, but the consent of Charles was necessary to satisfy the newly raised king. The Swede, however, still proud in his misfortunes, only said, "If my friend will not be king I can soon make another."

Stanislas wished to prevail on him to consent, so he undertook to travel in disguise through the midst of his enemies to Charles' retreat in Turkey. After meeting with a great many dangers and lucky escapes, he reached in safety a town called Jassy, the capital of Moldavia.

It happened that Charles had got into some difficulty with the king of the Turks, who is called the sultan, which Stanislas did not know any thing about. So when he found himself

among the Turks, he pretended that he was an officer in Charles' service.

The Turk was acquainted with the looks of Stanislas, and at once saw through his disguise. He immediately took him prisoner and carried him to the sultan.

When Charles heard that he was taken, he exclaimed—"Tell him never to make peace with Augustus; assure him fortune will soon change!"

But years passed by, and Charles and Augustus died, and Stanislas was again called to the throne of Poland. He went back quite unwillingly. Russia and Austria were very desirous to take him prisoner before he could reach Warsaw, and thus prevent his being chosen and crowned.

He had been living during the reign of Augustus in France. In returning to Warsaw, he

went through Germany in company with only one friend, in the disguise of a merchant. He passed all the guards in safety, and reached the city just as they were on the point of choosing the king.

His return was immediately proclaimed, and he received all the votes of sixty thousand nobles. But Russia had no idea of being disappointed in this manner, and sent an army of sixty thousand men to ravage and lay waste the fields of Poland.

Stanislas was again stripped of his honours, and obliged to fly with his nobles to Dantzic. His fortune appears to have been a very strange one. He seems to have found it as hard to keep his throne in the present case, as to get rid of it in former times.

The city was defended with obstinate courage for more than five months. The enemy attacked it a great many times very furiously, but in

vain. They tried to beat down the walls with their cannon, but could not succeed.

In one attack more than eight thousand Russians were slain. A part of their intrenchments is still called the "Russian burial ground." At length the governor of one of the forts turned traitor. He gave up his post to the enemy.

The town was no longer a safe place for the king, and he accordingly determined to leave it. His flight was full of dangerous adventures, and as I know you would like to hear all about it, you will find the story in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

Escape of the King from Dantzic, and his numerous adventures with the Cossacks.

I AM now going to tell you the story of the king's escape. You will see from this that kings fare no better at all times than common people, and often a good deal worse.

The king, having made up his mind to leave the city, bought a peasant's dress, and set out on his flight about ten o'clock in the evening of the twenty-seventh of June, 1734. This happened you see about an hundred years ago.

He was accompanied by one of his generals and a party of peasants. After passing the ditch beyond the walls of the city, they proceeded in a boat on their journey. The river Vistula had at that time overflowed its banks, and the whole country about was covered with water.

Day dawned, however, before they had sailed a single mile from the walls of the city, and they were obliged to hide themselves in a mean hut, within a short distance of the enemy. They passed the day there, fortunately, without being discovered, and at night again pursued their voyage.

At midnight the general and two companions left the others to sail over the marsh, while they endeavoured to find a better way by land. Stanislas saw the general no more. He was now left with only two guides, and they were ill looking fellows that he could not safely trust out of his sight with a six-pence.

At day-break they again looked round to find a hiding-place till night. They found a hut belonging to an acquaintance of the two peasants, and here the king was put into a little chamber, and left to very pleasant thoughts upon a bundle of straw.

The two guides then went out to look for the general and his companions. The king felt quite disagreeably. The Russians might drop in upon him very unceremoniously, or his gallow-looking companions might betray him to them.

The king rose from his straw and went to the window. Here he saw a Russian officer and two soldiers walking very solemnly up and down the meadow, amusing themselves by the sight of the horses grazing.

The appearance of these armed soldiers, with horses so far from the camp, made the king think that he had really fallen into a trap. His alarm was still increased by seeing several Cossacks galloping along the fields towards his hut. The Cossacks are a very brave race, and ride very good horses.

The Cossacks immediately entered the house, but they only came for something to eat and

drink, and in about a couple of hours went away.

Towards night the king began to feel rather uncomfortably in his loft, and went down stairs to talk with his guide. After dark they set out again on their journey, and at length reached the brink of the river Vistula. Here they could not procure a boat, and were obliged to keep on through the marshes which they had just left.

After walking another league, they arrived at a house in which Stanislas met a man who immediately knew him. "What do I see?" said this fellow to the peasants. "One of our comrades, to be sure," said they. "I am not to be deceived," he replied; "it is king Stanislas."

The king immediately stepped forward, and said in a firm tone—"I am he; but I know from your countenance that you will not refuse us

the assistance we need in our present situation.” The man was so much pleased and flattered by this frankness, that he promised to provide a boat for passing the Vistula, and kept his word.

In the mean time the king was rejoined by the peasant from whom he had parted on the night following his escape. He told him that the Cossacks were riding about in every quarter in search of them.

His friendly host then returned with news that he had obtained a boat. As there were two Russians, however, in the boatman’s house, he advised that the passage should be delayed. The king accordingly determined to stay in the house of this honest peasant during that night and the next day.

On the next night, they set out to cross the river. The host went first, then Stanislas and his guides followed. At a distance on both sides, the fires of the enemy’s camp were blaz-

ing to light the king on his way. This frightened the peasants very much.

Their fear was increased, when their host rode back to say that he saw troops of Cossacks before them, and that he had come very near being taken prisoner.

The peasants began to talk together, without the king's knowledge, about returning. They finally told the king that they had made up their mind to go back. It was in vain that Stanislas and his friendly host attempted to prevent them.

At length the king told them that if they were so base as to desert him, he would at once call the Cossacks to seize the whole of them. So they were forced to go with him, keeping far enough behind to run at the first notice.

At length they reached the river, got into their boat, and crossed to the other side. Just as they were about to land, the king thanked his host very kindly, and gave him a handful of

ducats. Now a ducat was a great deal of money for such a poor man, and I suppose he never even dreamed of seeing a handful of them.

But the honest peasant refused, and drew back ashamed. The king insisted upon his taking them, but he still refused. At last the fine fellow consented to take two of them, which he said he should keep as a remembrance of the pleasure he had received from knowing his king.

But Stanislas had not yet escaped from his dangers; and you will find all about them in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Conclusion of the King's story.

AT a short distance from the other bank of the Vistula, the party entered a small village, which they were not much pleased to hear was often visited by the Russians. The peasants, however, thought there was nothing to fear, and threw themselves on a bed in the first cottage they came to, and went asleep.

While these poor fellows were sleeping, the king kept watch. He at length woke up one of them, and sent him to buy some sort of a carriage.

In about two hours the peasant returned so drunk that he could hardly stand. A man came with him who had a carriage to sell, and they soon struck a bargain. I venture to say that the king did not stop long to beat him down in the price.

As soon as the sot saw the ducats, which the king took out to pay for the carriage, he began to be very noisy. He talked about his fidelity and great services, the risks he had run, and insisted upon knowing on the spot what he was to have for his pay.

A large crowd of the villagers was soon collected by his noisy conduct, to see and hear what was going on. They stared and listened for some time in stupid wonder, not knowing what to make of it.

They were all astonished that such a poor peasant as Stanislas appeared to be, should have twenty-five ducats to pay for a carriage. They wondered still more to find him attended by so many servants.

There is no telling what might have happened, had not the leader of the peasants said to the crowd—"Take no notice of this poor drunken fellow. When he is in liquor, he always speaks

as if he was in the company of kings and princes. If you listen to him he will make us all some great characters."

The fellow was then laughed at and hooted by the villagers, though some of the shrewdest of them shook their heads and thought there was something out of the way. But the party got into their vehicle, and laying the drunkard down in the bottom of it, drove on as fast as possible.

They passed through several villages occupied by the Russian and Saxon soldiers, but luckily without being observed. They at length reached the banks of the Nogat in safety. I hardly think you will find this river upon your maps, though it was wide enough to puzzle Stanislas and the peasants very much to cross it.

There was no boat in sight, and none of the peasants were willing to run the risk of being discovered by inquiring for one. The king was

angry at their cowardice, and determined to go and ask for one himself.

At the same time he proceeded to alight from the carriage for that purpose. The peasants, however, tried to prevent him, saying that his speech would betray him. He laughed at them and jumped upon the ground.

His conductors then threw themselves before him, and said they would rather die than suffer him to advance a step further. The king insisted, and they were obliged to yield. "Well," said they, "since it is your wish to hang us, we leave you." "With all my heart," said the king, "I wish you a pleasant journey."

The king then entered a cottage, and, in a tone suited to his dress, told the good woman whom he found there, that he was going to cross the river to buy cattle, and would thank her to tell him where he could find the best passage.

“O,” she replied, “you have come just in good time. You will find it very hard to get over the river, and I have got some fine cattle to sell you.”

The king told her that he could not buy till he had gone over the river to get some money. “But there is no boat,” said the good woman, “so what will you do?” “Just as you advise me,” replied the king; “I prefer receiving a favour from you than from any one else.”

“I see you are a good fellow,” said the woman, “and I will send my son with you. He will take you about a mile from here. A fisherman, who is a great friend of his, lives on the opposite bank, and at a certain signal will cross over and carry you to the other side. You could not have a safer or easier way of crossing.”

The king thanked the woman and left the house with her son. The signal was given, the fisherman appeared with the boat, and Stanislas

was soon landed in the Prussian dominions, free from danger.

He here found that orders had been given by the king to give him every assistance, and receive him with honour and respect. He passed through the different villages in honour.

When he arrived at Konigsburg, he was entertained splendidly in the king's palace. From hence he went to France.

The French king was his son-in-law, and gave Stanislas a retreat, and took up arms against his enemies.

Stanislas afterwards gave up all pretensions to the throne of Poland. He passed the remainder of his life in retirement, devoting himself to the study of philosophy and literature.

This part of his life was the pleasantest and happiest of the whole. The only thing that took place to trouble him was the death of his little grandson, a very bright and noble child,

who had been a great consolation and pride to him.

Stanislas died in 1766. His death was occasioned by fire accidentally catching his dressing gown, when there was no page near to assist him. He was very much beloved and lamented.

CHAPTER XI.

About the Patriots.

AFTER Stanislas left the throne of Poland, a son of the old king Augustus took possession of it. He was more fond of hunting and his pleasures, than of looking after the affairs of government. Being of a mild disposition, however, the Poles did not suffer much during his reign, though they did not care much when he died.

During the latter part of his life, the famous Russian queen Catharine undertook to drive him from the throne, and make a king of a favourite of her own, named Poniatowski.

The Poles were very angry to think that such a miserable fellow should wear the crown of Poland. They wished to give it to an old and tried patriot named Branicki. But he was now growing old, and did not possess sufficient vigour.

Catharine kept 60,000 soldiers on the borders of Poland, ready to march at a moment's notice. She also sent prince Repnin to Warsaw, to see Poniatowski and carry him some money. This man said that "his sovereign should give Poland whatever king she thought fit, the meanest gentleman, Polish or foreign, and that no power on earth could hinder her."

Ten thousand Russian soldiers were now on the march to Warsaw. The patriots collected forces in that city amounting to about three thousand men. They were under the command of Branicki and Radziwill.

The time for the meeting of the assembly to choose a king had now arrived. The senate house was crowded with Russian soldiers. This assembly was called the diet. Only eight senators out of fifty were present, and the marshal, whose duty it was to open the meeting, did not make his appearance.

At length he came in, attended by an old patriot named Mokranowski. This brave man immediately exclaimed in a loud voice: "Since the Russian troops hem us in, I suspend the authority of the diet."

The soldiers who were present instantly drew their swords and rushed at the speaker with great fury. This assault was prevented, and the old marshal then said: "Gentlemen, since liberty no longer exists among us, I carry away this staff, and I will never raise it till the public is delivered from her troubles."

Mokranowski supported the old man, and again drew on himself the vengeance of the vile soldiers. "Strike," shouted he, crossing his arms, "strike; I shall die free, and in the cause of liberty."

They then turned to the marshal, and ordered him to resign his staff of office. "You may cut off my hand," he said, "or take my life; but

I am marshal, chosen by a free people, and my office can be taken from me only by a free people. I shall retire."

They surrounded him and tried to prevent his departure. Perceiving their violence, Mokranowski cried out, "Gentlemen, respect this old man; let him go out! If you must have a victim, here am I:—respect age and virtue!" Both of these aged patriots then left the assembly.

The diet was prolonged, and Poniatowski chosen king, while the senate house was surrounded and crowded by soldiers. Finding that force was to govern affairs at Warsaw, the generals Branicki and Radziwill left the city to make an union of the patriots in other parts of Poland and in Lithuania.

On the road, Radziwill with his troops met a body of Russian soldiers, and gave them battle. His wife and sister, both very young, accompa-

nied him. The cause in which they were engaged gave them a courage to go with the soldiers to the field of war. Here these delicate and beautiful women were to be seen on horseback, with sabres in their hands, encouraging the soldiers to revenge their country.

Several hundred of the Russian army were left dead upon the field. The patriots, however, were at length beaten, and Radziwill was obliged to seek refuge in Turkey.

Among the other patriots was Joseph Pulaski. Repnin, the Russian prince, at first despised him, but afterwards became very suspicious of him. One day this foreign tyrant threatened to strike him, because he put his cap on in his presence.

This insult added to Pulaski's abhorrence of the Russians. He became impatient to revenge himself upon the enemies of his country, and left Warsaw to go through the country and excite the Poles to rise against their oppressors.

Pulaski was accompanied by three sons and his nephew. These were all very young, but the patriot devoted them from this early age to their country.

In a very short time they had been able to raise eight thousand men. Repnin was very much enraged at the rising of the patriots, and threatened to massacre all of them without delay. A number of battles took place, in which the patriots always obtained the victory.

New parties of the patriots were now formed all over the country. Catharine declared them rebels, and whole regiments of Russians and Cossacks marched against them; robbing, laying waste, and murdering on the way.

But the Russians were so powerful and numerous, compared with the little armies of the patriots, that they at last conquered them. I am now going to tell you of a very bold attempt that was made to carry off the king from the midst of Warsaw.

CHAPTER XII.

Daring attempt to seize the King.

THE patriots were desirous to seize the king, and carry him prisoner to their camp. A plan was accordingly formed and proposed to Pulaski. He did not entirely approve the plot, but did not see fit to oppose it.

“I give you no orders,” said Pulaski, “but I forewarn you that I shall approve the plan, only as you respect the life of the prisoner whom you are going to seize.” “Twenty times,” replied Strawinski, “I could have killed him in Warsaw. I did not, because it would have injured the patriots. Why should you suspect me now? I have resolved to deliver Poniatowski to them alive.”

The day fixed for this plot was the third of November, 1771. The whole number of men

concerned was about forty, under the command of Pulaski, and three other Polish chiefs of distinction.

On the second of the month they entered Warsaw, disguised as peasants. They brought in wagons full of hay, as if with the intention of selling it. Under this they concealed their saddles, arms, and clothes.

The king had been dining, on the third of the month, at the mansion of his uncle, and was returning between nine and ten to the palace. His attendants were two pages, two valets, and a few guards. Two gentlemen were also riding with him in his carriage.

Strawinski had divided his friends into two bands. One of them remained without the walls of the city, and the second attacked the carriage.

About two hundred paces from the mansion where the king had been dining, the patriots

ordered the coachman to stop. Two of the guards resisted and were immediately killed. The rest of the attendants instantly fled.

The king now opened the door of the carriage to escape. As the night was extremely dark, he had some hope of stealing away without being taken. After a short struggle, without receiving any injury, Poniatowski was forced upon a horse, and the whole party rode off for the appointed place of meeting without the city.

The attendants immediately spread the alarm at the palace, where all was confusion and disorder. They ran to the spot where the king was seized, and found nothing there but his hat. In the general alarm, no steps were taken to pursue the fugitives.

When the troop came to the ditch that surrounds Warsaw, they were obliged to leap it. In the attempt the king's horse broke its leg.

In the delay which this occasioned, part of

the men were separated from the rest. Attempting to find each other, they lost their way in the dark, got into a marsh, and Poniatowski was soon left with only one man.

The name of this man was Kosinski. From being one of the boldest of the whole troop, he suddenly became one of the most cowardly and the basest. The king promised to pardon and reward him, if he would only assist him to return in safety to Warsaw.

Kosinski consented, threw himself at the king's feet, begged his forgiveness, and swore to protect him against every enemy. They then directed their course to a neighbouring mill, to obtain shelter. Kosinski knocked, but no answer being given, he broke a pane of glass in the window, and requested lodging for a nobleman plundered by robbers.

The miller supposed them to be thieves, and for more than half an hour refused to admit

them. At length the king himself approached, and said through the broken pane—"If we were robbers, as you suppose, we should break the door down at once, without stopping to talk about it."

The miller thought there was some sense in this remark, and opened the door to them. He was still, however, more than half afraid, and stood trembling in his shoes till he really found out that he had no cause to suspect any mischief.

The king immediately tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and wrote a note to the colonel of his foot-guards, telling him where he was, and commanding his presence there. One of the miller's servants was prevailed upon to carry this note to Warsaw.

When the messenger arrived with the note, the colonel instantly rode to the mill, followed by a band of the guards. Being admitted by

Kosinski, who kept watch at the door with his drawn sabre, he found the king asleep on the ground, covered by the miller's cloak.

The king returned to his palace early in the morning. The conspirators were pursued by the Cossacks, and one of them killed. Kosinski, for being both a coward and a traitor, was rewarded as the preserver of the king's life.

Pulaski afterwards went to America, and during the revolutionary war was appointed brigadier-general by Congress. At the attack upon Savannah, by general Lincoln, Pulaski was riding in full gallop with two hundred horsemen against the enemy, when he received a death wound.

He was a very brave and useful officer, and much lamented. In the next chapter, I will tell you about the gallant Kosciusko, who was also an officer in the American army during the revolution.

CHAPTER XIII.

Story of Kosciusko.

DURING the reign of Poniatowski, the three great neighbours of Poland agreed to divide this nation into three parts, and each take one of them. These neighbours were Russia, Prussia, and Austria. There was no help for it. They marched large armies into the devoted country, and the Poles were forced to submission.

Those men who were too proud to remain and see their country's oppression, were driven to wander as outcasts and exiles in foreign lands. They were waiting for a favourable time to draw the sword once more against their tyrants.

Their fellow-patriots in Poland were meanwhile suffering still more severely, and watching with impatience for the moment to rise in arms.

They formed a plan for this purpose, appointed Cracow as the place of meeting, and chose Kosciusko as their leader.

The Russian tyrants were very suspicious, and committed a great many cruelties every day. At length a large number of Polish patriots had collected together at Cracow, under the command of their great leader.

This was Thaddeus Kosciusko. He was a very brave and noble man, and at a very early age had learned what a soldier ought to know, at the military school of Warsaw.

While a young man, he came over to America, to assist our fathers in the revolutionary war. He was the friend of liberty, and our cause was dear to his heart. Washington loved him very sincerely, and made him his aid-de-camp.

When our war had ended gloriously, he returned to his native country. Here he was found among the bravest and wisest patriots.

His countrymen placed the highest confidence in him, and when they had resolved to rise against their tyrants, made him their general.

On the first of April, 1794, he left Cracow at the head of four thousand men. About half of these were armed with scythes, such as the farmers mowed their grass with. This was because the Russians had taken away all their guns and swords, or because they were too poor to buy them.

They marched towards Warsaw, to meet an army of the Russians. This army was about three times as large as their own, with a plenty of fine guns and swords, and as much powder and good provisions as they wanted.

In two or three days the armies met, and a great battle was fought. The Poles were full of courage and fury. Their enemies were brave and obstinate. But after fighting hard for five hours, the Russians were obliged to fly. They left behind them 3000 dead upon the field.

Soon after this, the Polish soldiers stationed in a fort at Warsaw, under the Russian command, joined the cause of Kosciusko. A continued fight was kept up on that occasion in Warsaw, for the space of two days.

But the Prussians and the Austrians immediately joined the Russians, and marched against the army of the patriots. This was now encamped about nine miles from Warsaw, at a place called Pracka-Wola.

It was here that one of his brother generals found Kosciusko sleeping on straw. He used to wear a surtout of coarse gray cloth, and his table was always spread with great plainness.

Kosciusko never wore any sign of his military power. He had no desire or ambition but to serve his country and fight for it. Mildness and modesty ever appeared in his face.

But the cause of the patriots, even under so excellent a leader, did not finally succeed. On

the tenth of October, a bloody battle was fought at a place called Macieiwice. It was for a long time doubtful which army would beat.

A general named Ponenski was expected by the Poles with a fresh body of troops, just in the heat of the battle. But he did not arrive, and Kosciusko, at the head of his principal officers, made a grand charge into the midst of the enemy.

Kosciusko fell covered with wounds; and all his companions were either killed or taken prisoners. This great man lay senseless among the dead, but at length he was distinguished, notwithstanding the plainness of his uniform, and was found still breathing.

The Cossacks knew and respected him for his valour. They made a litter with their lances to carry him to their general, who ordered his wounds to be dressed, and treated him with great kindness and respect.

As soon as he was able to travel, he was conveyed to St. Petersburg, where Catharine condemned this noble patriot to end his days in prison. The Poles lamented his captivity with public and universal grief. They exclaimed on all sides, "Kosciusko is no more; the country is lost."

When Catharine died, Kosciusko was released from prison. He immediately proceeded to America, and having spent some time with his old companions, retired to a residence in the neighbourhood of Fontainebleau. He died in the year 1817, in Switzerland. His corpse is placed in the cathedral of Cracow, in the same chapel with the great Sobieski.

CHAPTER XIV.

About Constantine and his cruelties.

MY little readers would now like to know about what has been going on in Poland during the last few years. The emperor of Russia managed so as to get the kingdom of Poland united to his own dominions. The chief power over this kingdom had been for a long time in the hands of the grand duke Constantine.

This man was like an untamed tiger. He gave full play to his cruel passions, without the least regard for the rights of his fellow-creatures.

There was a rich and respectable Pole, named Woloski, the principal brewer of Warsaw. By some mistake, one of the clerks, without his knowledge, hired a Russian deserter for a servant in the establishment.

The offender was found out, and the grand duke ordered Woloski to be chained, and in this condition to work with a wheelbarrow in the public streets. His daughter, an affectionate and amiable young lady, went to the grand duke to beg him to pardon her father. He treated her with very abusive language, and turned her out of the house.

Some of the publishers of papers in Warsaw happened to say something disagreeable to Constantine. He sent a band of soldiers in the middle of the night to break up their presses and destroy their types.

One of the most infamous acts, however, that this monster of cruelty committed, was on the following occasion. A little boy in one of the schools, named Plater, had written on the bench "The third of May forever!" This was the anniversary of some great patriotic event in Polish history.

This was discovered by some of the thousand spies, that the grand duke employed even among these infants, and all the boys were asked who wrote these words. Not one of them would betray poor Plater, and they were all ordered to be flogged.

At length, the little boy, unwilling that his companions should suffer on his account, confessed that he had written the sentence himself. The grand duke condemned him to be a soldier for life ; and incapable of being advanced to any higher rank in the army. When his mother threw herself before the carriage of Constantine, to ask forgiveness for her wretched child, he spurned her like a dog with his foot.

This tyrant used often to shave the heads of females who had displeased him. On one occasion, four soldiers were severely punished because they hesitated to carry this barbarous order into execution.

He took great pleasure in witnessing, personally, the infliction of these punishments. Sometimes he would command offenders to be tarred and feathered, and amuse himself with their appearance.

This career of cruelty and oppression once met with a rebuke, in the following manner. Among the other men who had excited his fear and jealousy, was a Polish officer of rank and influence.

This man he ordered to be confined in a foul dungeon, placed under a common sewer, or drain. There he was lingering through existence in misery.

This happened to reach the ears of a bold and upright priest, who felt it his duty to interfere, and if possible to soften the heart of the tyrant. He accidentally obtained admission into Constantine's presence.

He then told him the object of his visit, with

great respect and firmness. The grand duke became very much enraged, and stormed with great fury.

The priest declared that he would persist in what he considered his duty. The grand duke was astonished at his boldness, and sprang out of the window, declaring that there was a madman within. The priest was taken to a convent and confined, and the poor Polish officer obtained no relief.

I do not tell you these things because I believe you like to read about such cruelties, but that you may see how much reason you have to be thankful that there are no such tyrants in the fortunate country in which you are so happy as to live. I do not wonder that the Poles resolved to rise up against such governors, and attempt to be free. You shall now hear about the late revolution, that has ended so unfortunately for poor Poland.

CHAPTER XV.

The first night of the Revolution.

I AM now going to tell you about the way in which the present war in Poland began.

The grand duke was afraid to live in Warsaw, and had taken up his residence in a palace in the outskirts of the city. This palace was at a short distance from the barracks of three regiments of Russian soldiers. He thought he should certainly be safe from attack under the cover of their muskets.

Constantine had established a school for the education of inferior officers, in the hopes of destroying a national spirit in the army, and of cherishing a partiality for the Russians. The students at this school were about one hundred and eighty in number. Many of these, however, engaged in a plot to overthrow the Rus-

sian tyranny, and restore freedom to their country.

On the 29th of November, 1830, many a heart beat high in the capital of Poland. The patriots had fixed upon that day for the commencement of a revolution. Seven in the evening was the hour appointed for that great purpose. The signal agreed on was the burning of a wooden house, situated near the bank of the river on which Warsaw stands.

Throughout the city, the patriots were on the watch, ready to stir up the people on the appearance of the signal. Most of them were quite young men. A band of one hundred and twenty, who were to strike the first blow, were assembled in the southern part of Warsaw.

All was ready. At the stroke of seven, as soon as the flame burst from the burning house, the first cry was raised. Many brave students, and some officers, rode through the streets,

shouting—‘To arms! To arms, Poles, and down with the tyrant.’

The shout flew through the city with the swiftness of lightning, and the people gathered from all sides to join in the cry of ‘To arms!’ At this time the hundred and twenty cadets left their barrack, and marched to the head quarters of the Russian cavalry. It was resolved to take immediate possession of all the chief gates; and as the quarters were surrounded by a deep ditch, over which there were but few bridges, the Russians were forced to a difficult and bloody retreat.

On their arrival, the cadets found the soldiers in the utmost confusion. Some were saddling their horses, others were leading them out; others were busy in securing the magazines. The Poles took advantage of this confusion, and after firing a few rounds, rushed with a ‘hurrah’ through the gates. An entire rout followed;

and eighteen hundred Russian cavalry were dispersed by a mere handful of boys.

While their comrades were attacking the palace, some ten or twelve students ran through the gardens of the grand duke to the palace. Having forced their way through the principal entrance, and killed one or two wretched fellows who offered resistance, they rushed towards the bed chamber of the grand duke. They were just on the point of reaching it, when they were stopped by a faithful servant, who closed a secret door just in time for his master to escape.

Constantine went out of the window in so great a hurry, that he forgot to put on his pantaloons. He had on his night gown and night cap, but was very glad to get away at any rate.

He fled to his guards, who instantly turned out to pursue the conspirators. Finding they had been disappointed in their object, the young

soldiers joined their companions at the bridge of Sobieski, and returned into the city.

After one or two skirmishes with the Russians by the way, the united corps entered the city, singing patriotic songs, and shouting 'Poland forever.' Every where the citizens echoed their shouts with spirit, and joined their ranks in great numbers.

The band was now large enough to bear a division, and a party was sent to break open the public prisons. These prisons, always guarded by Russian troops, were stormed; many of the soldiers were slain, the doors were broken down, and the innocent victims of Russian tyranny were set free.

When the city had been nearly cleared of the Russians, great multitudes hastened to the arsenal for arms and ammunition. No resistance was offered. All the apartments were immediately opened, and more than 80,000 muskets,

pistols, and sabres, were obtained. They were distributed without delay or confusion.

Being now well armed, the people were arranged in companies, under different captains, and sent to various parts of the city. Parties were appointed to march through the streets, and arrest all spies and Russian officers, who might attempt to fly. They arrested more than three hundred.

Towards two o'clock in the morning, order was again restored. Most of the patriots assembled in a place called the Long Street, to consult on what should be done the following day. Here they made addresses to the people, who received them with great enthusiasm, and with shouts of 'Poland forever!'

The assembled crowds then knelt down to return thanks to heaven. A more sublime scene was never described. The immense multitude kneeling at midnight, in the dim glare

of torches and watch-fires, and offering up prayers to their great deliverer, presented a sight which no one could look upon without admiration.

CHAPTER XVI.

Rejoicings in Warsaw.—Choice of a leader.—Description of Pulawa.—
Prince Czartoriski.

ON the following day, Warsaw presented a scene of joy, which her inhabitants had not for many years witnessed. Shouts of ‘Liberty,’ and ‘Poland forever!’ rang through the streets.

At about six in the morning, the drums beat for the assembling of the soldiers. The public places were crowded with persons of all ages. Old men recalled the days of Kosciusko, and the little children, almost too young to know why, shouted ‘Down with the Russians,’ and brandished their mimic weapons with all the heart of manhood.

The Russians were still in possession of the northern and southern parts of Warsaw. Two detachments of the Poles marched against them

without delay, and the whole city was cleared of the enemy before nine o'clock. The walls opposite the Russian troops were put in a state of defence, and manned by soldiers and armed citizens.

When the patriots had thus freed the city of the enemy, they began to look about them for a chief, to direct their future movements. Their choice fell upon a brave general, named Chlopicki. He had been a distinguished officer in his earlier years, but had retired from the army, in disgust, at the conduct of Constantine.

The choice of Chlopicki was received with shouts of joy. After all the leaders had declared their consent to his election, he was proclaimed commander in chief. One of the patriots then delivered an address, in which he contrasted the past sufferings of Poland with her present hopes, and concluded with a direct appeal to Chlopicki, 'Brother—take the sword

of your ancestors and predecessors. Guide the nation that has placed its trust in you, in the way of honour. Save this unhappy country.'

When this ceremony was ended, the general appeared in a balcony before the assembled people. They received him with shouts of 'Our country, and our deliverer, forever!' The general thanked them for their confidence, promised never to abuse it, and swore that he would to the last defend the liberty of Poland.

Prince Czartoriski was chosen another member of the government. He was a noble old man, about sixty years of age. He was the proprietor of a beautiful town named Pulawa, about which you may perhaps like to hear something. It is situated about fifty-four miles south of Warsaw, on the right bank of the river Vistula.

The town is on the side of a hill, which declines towards the water in the form of an am-

phitheatre. Meadows of long grass border on the river. The town is surrounded by a beautiful garden, with groves of oaks and poplars, and enlivened by herds of cattle, cottages, and shepherds' cabins, in various styles of building. Great parks, extending in every direction, surround this garden, intersected by beautiful avenues of linden trees.

Here are many beautiful works in marble, statues, and obelisks. Among these is the temple of Sibylla, with a magnificent statue of alabaster. In one of the grottoes, also, is a very beautiful image of a nymph. The palace is a splendid building. Its apartments are large and rich. The prince was the owner of the largest library in Poland, and of the largest library in Europe belonging to a private individual, and yet open for the public use.

Czartoriski happened to be in Pulawa, when the revolution broke out. Summoned to the

assistance of his beloved country, he hastened to devote himself to her service. In his public career, he was throughout the whole struggle just, mild, and firm in his patriotic devotion.

He considered all the Poles as his brethren. He shared in all the fatigues of war, though now almost sixty years old. Accompanying Skrzynecki in his marches, he fought at his side in many battles. His whole character was noble, and his whole conduct was valiant and high-minded.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Grand Duke.—His encampment.—The Russian prisoners.—March of the Grand Duke.

THE new government now began to think on what was best to be done. The people had driven Constantine from the city, but they did not know how soon he might come back, with a great army, and endeavour to regain his lost dominions. On the whole, they determined to send messengers to the grand duke, and ask him whether he intended to retire in peace, or to return and attack the city.

The patriots, who were sent to discover his intentions, found Constantine encamped with his army in the fields of Mokotow. They told him that it would be his wisest plan to depart quietly. If he would consent to do this, they promised not to trouble him, but to provide him

with every thing necessary to hasten his departure, and to assist him on his way.

The grand duke was not much pleased at this kind of language, from his old subjects ; but he was obliged to submit to it. He told them that he had never intended to attack Warsaw, and that if he should find himself obliged to do so, he would give them two days' notice. He also promised, that he would beg the emperor of Russia not to punish them for the past.

This answer did not suit the people of Warsaw. They laughed at the grand duke's promise to ask the emperor not to punish them, and thought they could see to that very well themselves. It seemed to them that their good swords were much better protection against punishment, than all the promises of Constantine. They replied to him, therefore, that if he did not march away with his army in forty-eight hours, they would attack him without delay.

Order was now for a while restored to the city. A guard of national troops was formed, and posted in the different streets, for the protection of the inhabitants. The shops were opened, and people bought and sold, as if there had been no army before the city.

The government now sent proclamations through all the provinces, to tell their fellow-countrymen the great events that had happened at Warsaw. They invited the troops at all the distant military stations, to hasten to the capital. Fortifications were erected at all parts of the city, and every thing was put in order to repel an attack of the enemy.

The Russian prisoners, who had remained in Warsaw, were treated with great kindness. To the officers of rank, and the ladies, the royal palace was assigned as their residence. The private soldiers were lodged in barracks. Afterwards, the poorer Russians were permitted to

go about the streets, and earn whatever they could by their own labour, in addition to their usual allowance.

This was generous conduct in the Poles, and deserving of praise. They knew that the Russian soldiers bore no ill will to them, and that they were obliged to obey the cruel commands of their tyrannical masters. And they could not be cruel to them merely because they were Russians. The poor fellows, perhaps, fared better in their captivity among the Poles, than they did under the shelter of their own camp.

As the enemy remained before the city, on the second of December, and had given no sign of departure, the people, as well as the army, still continued under arms. It was at this time that twelve companies of students were formed, and paraded. They were called the Academical Legion.

This band of youths presented a most noble

appearance. They were all burning for the liberty of Poland, and for vengeance against the tyrants who had oppressed her. Many of them had just been rescued from dungeons, where the jealousy of the Russian government had confined them. Their cheeks were pale, and their steps feeble, from the sufferings of long imprisonment; but with the hope of freedom, new colour flushed in their cheek, and their limbs gained new strength. This legion was sent to the post nearest the enemy.

The inhabitants of the neighbouring provinces were now daily marching into the city. At one time, more than a thousand peasants, and about fifty peasant girls, armed with scythes, clubs, and every other kind of rustic weapon, were seen thronging from the country, and entering the streets of Warsaw. They were received with shouts of joy and gladness, and escorted to the Bank, to receive the welcome of the national government.

Another message was now sent to the grand duke, to request his immediate departure with all his troops. Constantine was compelled to obey, and commenced his march on the route that was pointed out to him. Before marching, he issued a proclamation to the Poles, in which he promised never to fight against a people whom he said he had always loved. The Poles thought that he had such a very strange way of showing his love, that the sooner he was out of their way, the better it would be, both for them and him.

It was early on the morning of the third of December, that the grand duke commenced his march. Agents had been sent before, to prepare every convenience for him. In a village where he halted with his troops, he met one of the Polish patriots, general Wolicki, who was on his way to Warsaw. The general called upon Constantine, to learn if he could render

him any service, with regard to the accommodation of his troops.

Constantine thanked him with much coldness, and at once began to abuse the Poles for their conduct towards him. He said that he had conferred numberless benefits on the nation, and "for all this, they wished to assassinate me."

Wolicki assured the grand duke, that his palace had not been entered with any such design; that, on the contrary, no personal injury was intended. Constantine was still more enraged. "They have driven me from the country," he exclaimed, with great fury, "but I shall return soon, to their sorrow. Yes, Wolicki," he continued, "and you shall stay with me as a security for my officers, who are kept prisoners in Warsaw."

In spite of every remonstrance, Wolicki was arrested and retained a prisoner. He soon, however, formed a plan of escape. The grand

duke passed that night at the village of Graniza, and Wolicki was acquainted with some of the inhabitants. Finding a chance to speak with one of them, he told him what had happened, and requested him to raise an alarm that night, as if the Polish army were in the neighbourhood. His friend raised the alarm, as requested. The citizens began to shout, the Russians were terrified, and flew to their arms; and in the midst of the disturbance, Wolicki walked away very quietly, without being observed.

When he arrived at Pulawa, the grand duke was very kindly treated by the princess Czar-toriski. In Lubartow, he was received in the most friendly manner by the princess Lubomirska. An anecdote is related of this lady, which does high honour to her firmness and patriotism.

The grand duke was accompanied by general Roszniecki, an old Polish officer, who had disgraced himself by becoming the instrument of

Constantine, in tyrannizing over his native country. He was the chief of the spies, employed to transmit every thing of a suspicious nature to the government. This man demanded, of the princess Lubomirska, an apartment in a pavilion adjoining the palace, intended for Constantine. With heroic dignity, the princess replied to him, in the presence of the grand duke, "In my house, there is no room for traitors."

On the way to Lenczna, the Russians fell in with a party of Polish lancers. Constantine advanced to them with great show of friendship, shook hands with several, and tried to persuade them to return with him. "Lancers," said he, "set a good example to your countrymen, and remember the duty you owe to your king."

His display of kindness was not confined to words. He offered them money, and promised them great rewards. The lancers rejected his promises, and his rewards, with indignation.

“We thank you, prince,” they replied, “but we had rather die in defence of our country, than live in the remembrance of having broken our faith to her.” With this reply, they continued their march, and passed the Russian troops, singing patriotic songs.

Among the other instances of patriotic devotion, in the modern history of Poland, is that of colonel Turno, aid-de-camp to the grand duke. This noble officer had served Constantine, faithfully, for fourteen years. He had suffered his caprices and follies, with the hope of doing good to others. At this time of trial the grand duke believed that Turno, whom he loved and valued, would still remain with him.

When Constantine arrived on the frontiers of Poland, Turno rode up to take his leave. The grand duke was astonished, and at first was unable to speak. After some moments, he exclaimed, with grief that he could not conceal,

“And will you, too, leave me, Turno? whom I have loved so truly, and who have served so faithfully?”

Turno replied, “I am sorry to leave your highness, and in another cause I never should leave you. But my country calls for me, and I must obey. You are now on your own borders, and have left Polish ground. There is no further need of my service. It is my sacred duty to follow where Poland leads.”

The grand duke continued his march, with his troops, to Bialystok, the capital of a Russian province of the same name. Here he remained till the opening of the campaign. In the war which followed, he accepted a command in the army, to fight against the people who had treated him with so much kindness and generosity. He perished in disgrace and wretchedness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Revolution, continued.

THE fourth, fifth, and sixth days of December were remarkable days in the history of the revolution. Peasants and soldiers, hastily armed with such weapons as chance might offer, flocked to Warsaw from all quarters of the country. In a short time five thousand peasants were numbered, among whom were more than two hundred girls armed with sickles.

These were days of general joy and thanksgiving. The rich and poor, peasants and nobles, met on a common level, and embraced as friends. Tables were spread in the streets, loaded with refreshments for the strangers. On the fourth, the theatre was opened, for the first time during the revolution.

A play was performed, called "The Union of

the two Tribes." On account of its patriotic sentiments, this play had been before prohibited, under the government of the Russians. The theatre was crowded at an early hour, and no distinction was observed with regard to places. Before the play began, one of the patriots made an address to the audience. He reminded them of the wrongs and outrages to which they had been exposed, and informed them of the measures which the new government had taken for their protection and success.

After this speech, which was received with cheers, and shouts of joy, the orchestra played Kosciusko's march. This music was at first drowned in the cries of the audience: "Hail, our country, our father, our defender, Kosciusko! France, and Lafayette, the friend of Kosciusko, forever!" After this the Marseilles hymn, a national hymn of France, was played, and then a piece of popular Polish music.

The play was full of patriotic songs, and the audience joined in the chorus with the actors. At the end of the play, three standards, with the arms of the ancient provinces of Poland, were brought in, and folded into one, in the embraces of the actors, who represented the chiefs of the three tribes. The exultation of the audience then knew no bounds, and the whole theatre shook with thunders of applause.

One of the favourite actors then addressed the spectators in these words: "The monster Tyranny, terrified by the sudden blaze of liberty, has left the den from which he has hitherto spread terror and death. Oh that, scared by this light, he may be driven farther and farther, nor be suffered to rest on any of the fields of Poland. May he retire to the dark and icy regions of the north, whence he came, and Heaven grant that he may never return to us!"

After this, the patriots, who had been impris-

oned by Constantine for their love of country, and those who had been most distinguished in the early scenes of the revolution, were presented to the assembly. They were received with great joy, and carried about on the shoulders of the people with shouts. Many of the ladies were then brought forward, who had followed the cause of the patriots, or had given up their wealth to be expended in the cause of liberty.

These scenes were affecting beyond any power of description. Tears of joy flowed on all sides. It was a moment to be remembered forever, by all who shared in its feelings. There was no longer fear or suspicion. The enemy had been driven from the city, and all who remained were true friends to the liberty of Poland. They wept, they embraced each other, they talked over their sufferings and their hopes, and mingled their prayers to that Being who

directs the destinies of nations, and in whose hands is the fate of war.

On Sunday, the fifth of December, the churches of Warsaw were crowded with a devout and grateful people, imploring the blessings of Providence upon their cause.

The most solemn and affecting ceremonies of this day took place at Praga, a town in the neighbourhood of Warsaw, from which it is separated by the river Vistula. Here an altar was erected in the open air, and mass was said in the presence of more than fifty thousand beings, assembled to praise, and pray to, God.

The circle immediately surrounding the altar was composed of the twelve academical legions; bands of brave and noble youths, who had devoted themselves to secure the freedom of their country, or perish in its defence. What a glorious spectacle must this have been! How our feelings sympathize in that cause, to which age

lends its wise counsel, and long experience, and youth devotes its unwearied activity, and lion-hearted valour!

Between the religious ceremonies, addresses were made to the people. One was by a patriot, who had suffered under Constantine, and had just been released from his dungeon. "Brethren," said he, "but a few days ago it was accounted a crime, to pray for our unfortunate ancestors, murdered for devotion to the country which had given them birth. Now, under this open canopy of heaven, on soil enriched by the sacred blood of our fathers, we swear never to lay down our arms, till we shall have avenged, or shared, their fate." The assembled crowds then united in a patriotic hymn.

In the afternoon of the following day, more than an hundred thousand people were collected about the Field of Mars, to witness the appointment of Chlopicki as dictator. The dictator

was an officer first appointed in the old Roman republic, in times of extreme difficulty and peril, when there was need of great rapidity and energy of action. His power was supreme over all the officers of the state and of the army. His will was absolute, and his word law.

Such was the officer, whom the Poles thought it necessary to create at this time. Besides an immense crowd of spectators, the greater part of the army was present on the occasion. Chlopicki appeared with the senators, and was received with shouts of joy. His aspect was truly venerable. He addressed the people, and told them that he had accepted the office of dictator only for a short time, and because the condition of the country required strict energy and singleness of purpose.

“Be assured,” he added, “that no selfish feeling has impelled me to take this step, and that I have consented to take it only to promote

the welfare of Poland. The truth of this I call God to witness. May he assist me to make my promise good. Hail to our dear country!" The last sentence was echoed by the people with great clamour, who shouted with joy, "Hail to our dear country, and its brave defender, Chlo-picki!"

CHAPTER XIX.

Revolution, continued.

WHEN the emperor of Russia, Nicholas, learned that his province of Poland had expelled Constantine from her borders, and was in arms to recover her liberties, he determined to send a numerous army into the country, and crush the rebellion at once. He first issued two proclamations to his own subjects, and the Poles, in which he denounced the revolt as infamous treason, and the work of evil-minded men.

When the brave Poles received these proclamations of the emperor, their indignation knew no bounds. The honour and character of the nation were insulted by them. The people were roused in every quarter, and on all sides resounded the cry, "To battle! To battle!" It

was with difficulty that the troops could be persuaded from rushing immediately to the field.

The command of the army was now given to Prince Radzivil; for the dictator had not conducted affairs with the spirit and activity that had been expected. On the twenty-fifth of January, 1831, the troops began to leave Warsaw, to commence the campaign, and prepare to meet the immense forces that the emperor was to send against them.

This was one of the most trying moments of the revolution. When the march commenced, all the inhabitants of the neighbouring country left their homes, to witness the departure of the patriots, and give them their blessings. The plains about Warsaw, and the sides of the road through which the army was to pass, were crowded with spectators.

In marching through the streets of the city, the soldiers passed between throngs of people,

lining both sides of the streets. The old and young, the clergy, the venerable officers of government, and the children from the schools; in short, an immense assembly of both sexes and all ages, crowded the highway, to shower their acclamations and prayers on the noble band, who were going forth to fight the battles of freedom. The throng extended even to two miles beyond Praga.

All the regiments passed in review before the commander in chief, and each soldier took the oath to defend the country to the last drop of his blood. The air resounded with sentiments of the noblest patriotism and devotion. "Dear general," exclaimed the soldiers, "if you see us turn from the enemy, point our own cannon against us, and destroy us."

One of the regiments, knowing that the magazines were badly supplied with powder, at first refused to receive any cartridges. They said

they would furnish themselves from the Russians. "Forget, dear general," they said, "that we have no powder; but trust to our bayonets." Afterwards, they were persuaded to accept a small number of cartridges, but hoped to obtain a full supply on their first encounter with the enemy.

The parting scenes which took place at this moment were truly affecting. Fathers took leave of their children, giving them, as their last blessing, the charge to be true to their country. "My boy," said the brave soldier, as he bade a farewell to his family, "my boy, forget not the last words you may ever hear from my lips. Let your first and only thought be for the freedom of Poland. If I fall, avenge my death; if I live, it will only be to share with you the joys and blessings of liberty."

That night there was many a sad heart in Warsaw. Mothers kissed their offspring, as

they lay in the quiet of innocent sleep, and thought that a few hours might see them fatherless. But if there was much sadness, there was little repining or regret. The Polish women behaved with a firmness and courage that reflect great honour on their character. They considered the death of the parent a less evil than the slavery of the child.

In the camp, too, there was many a sad heart; but it was nerved with the strength of valour, and patriotism. The soldiers, as they lay on their straw pallets, or went the rounds of their night watches, thought of the wife and little ones, in whom their whole life was centered, and who were the dearest objects of their love. They then thought of Poland. They remembered her ancient glory, and her present shame, and swore by the home which they loved, that they would restore her to liberty or die in the attempt.

CHAPTER XX.

Story of Antoinette.

THE Russian emperor sent an army of about 200,000 men, to overrun and ravage his revolted provinces of Poland. Many and severe were the struggles which followed; and many were the examples of heroic virtue and firmness, which made the war of the revolution glorious.

The Polish women were eager to share the perils, and the triumphs, of their brethren. They proposed to form companies, under the command of ladies of the most distinguished families, to march in the rear of the army, and on the days of battle to carry off and relieve the wounded. This offer was not accepted; but it serves to show the enthusiasm which pervaded the whole nation.

Antoinette Tomaszewska was born in 1814, in the district of Rosienia, in Samogitia. The daughter of noble and wealthy parents, she was educated in the convent of Krose, by the nuns of the order of St. Benedict. Her stature was small, but finely proportioned. Large and expressive blue eyes lit up her beautiful face, which still wore an air of melancholy. But her soul was that of a heroine.

She had long been distinguished among her young companions, for romantic enthusiasm, and devotion to the land which had given her birth. With the utmost eagerness and delight, she listened to the tales of Poland's ancient glory, and shed bitter tears over the history of her wrongs and misfortunes. At these recitals, her eyes would sparkle with patriotism and indignation, and her heart panted with the desire of revenge.

When this hour at length arrived, Antoinette was scarcely sixteen; but on the first news of

the rising in Warsaw, her resolution was taken. Forgetful of her tender age, her sex, and her weakness, she disregarded even the tears of her family, in the thought of her country. She quitted her convent, and addressing a last farewell to the happy scenes of her childhood, she joined the army of one of the insurgent chiefs.

When Antoinette arrived in the camp, it resounded with shouts of sympathy and admiration. Men knew not which most to wonder at, her great beauty or exalted patriotism. But it was not her object to excite their wonder. Faithful to the noble feelings that prompted her, she went immediately to the chief, explained to him her motives and wishes, and demanded a horse and arms.

In spite of every objection, they were obliged to yield to her entreaties. She was enlisted in a body of horse, and in a few days could wield a lance as well as any of her companions. From

that moment she was entirely devoted to the service of her country.

Attached as a private soldier to the corps of Gruzewski, clothed in the uniform, and armed from head to foot, she was present with the corps in every action, and gallantly braved both danger and death. In a charge which was made at Maukuni in Samogitia, the young heroine performed prodigies of valour.

In this action, a regiment of Circassian cavalry severely harassed the rear of the Polish columns. Unable to keep the field against an enemy ten times more numerous, it became necessary to check the violence of the pursuit. The Polish cavalry were in consequence ordered to charge the Circassians.

Antoinette rushed forward with them. Her eyes flashing fire, her face burning with rage, she penetrated into the thickest of the enemy's ranks, giving an example of courage to her

countrymen, which insured them success. On returning to the camp, the young heroine was received amid long and enthusiastic hurrahs.

When the Polish arms met with reverses, Antoinette was unmoved. Following the retreat of the army, she distinguished herself in several skirmishes, and received the epaulets of a sub-lieutenant, as a reward for her bravery. Possessing the noblest qualities of a warrior, she was a model of patience and resignation, during the periods of difficulty and distress.

She consoled her companions by holding out to them the hope of a brighter future. Throughout a harassing retreat, amid fatigues and privations of every kind, no complaint or regret escaped her lips. One might have almost supposed that she had been educated to the trials of a camp.

At length, when even hope was lost, and nothing more was to be done, Antoinette fol-

lowed the fatal fortunes of the army, and entered Prussia with the corps of general Rohland. There, on the recital of her adventures and her exploits, she became an object of universal interest and hospitality. Both Poles and Prussians gazed with wonder upon a maiden, who had made a campaign as a private soldier, and at the point of the lance gained the epaulets of a sub-lieutenant.

Antoinette has since married a Polish officer, a warm admirer of her heroism and virtue. Sorrow for the fate of her unhappy country is now mingled with the feelings of a wife and mother; but she can never forget the wrongs and the miseries of Poland.

CHAPTER XXI.

Fall of Warsaw.—Conclusion.

THE story of the revolution is soon told. Battle followed battle, in which the Poles fought with desperate valour, and sometimes with brilliant success. Prince Radzivil resigned his command, and Skrzynecki, then only a colonel, was appointed in his place. The cause of Poland then gained strength. Foreign nations looked on, without interference. Austria forgot the inroad of the Turks, and the deliverance of Vienna by Sobieski.

Days of reverse and ill fortune came. The barbarous thousands of Russia poured into devoted Poland, and notwithstanding the breaking out of a pestilence, and the death of their celebrated general, Diebitsch, they marched to the

very gates of Warsaw. After a bloody defence, the capital fell, and on the seventh of September the enemy entered the city in triumph.

At the storming of Warsaw, the principal battery was defended by only two battalions, with a desperate valour that has never been surpassed. When it was beyond a doubt that the city must surrender, several privates of the artillery seated themselves on barrels of powder, to which they applied the torch with their own hands.

General Sovinski made a display of heroism, that was worthy of a better fate. Having lost one foot, he was seated, at his earnest request, on the altar of a church, that was defended to the last moment with the noblest courage. Here he continued to give orders, till all his companions had perished. Then, drawing forth two pistols, with one he shot a soldier of the enemy, who was rushing furiously against him, and

fired the other through his own heart, with the exclamation,—“ So dies a Polish general !”

Now came the time of vindictive and cruel punishment. The Russian emperor had again reduced his revolted provinces to subjection, and the movers of the revolution were to reap the reward of their patriotic devotion. Many distinguished Poles were sent into the interior of Russia and Siberia. Many of all ranks emigrated, some to France, some to England, and some to the United States. One of them, major Hordynski, wrote an account of the revolution, in which I have found many of my stories.

Of these unfortunate men, great numbers were thrown into prison, and are still suffering the pains of captivity. Such is the present condition of Poland ; she is a Russian province, and her subjects are either wandering in foreign countries, or pining in bondage at home.

You may ask, what do we, children of the

United States, care about poor Poland? We are well fed and well clothed, go in peace to school and to church, have good books to read, and are contented and happy.

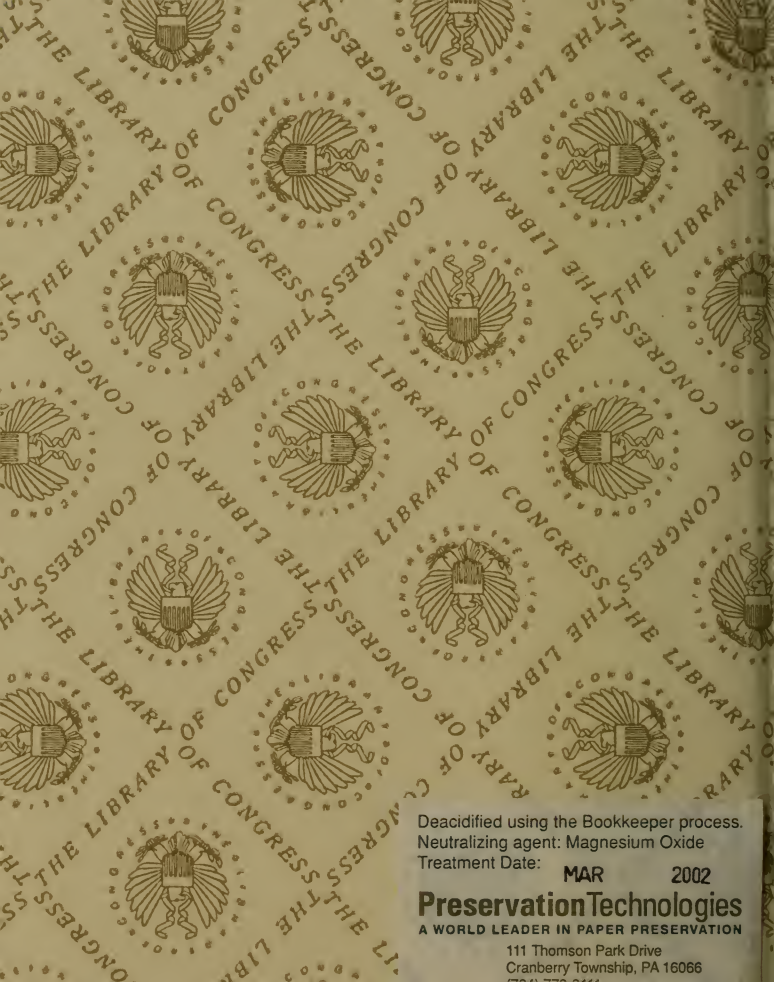
It is true that you possess all these blessings, and enjoy them so freely that you too often forget to be grateful for them. They are scattered over our happy country, with as much liberality as are the sunbeams and the showers, which enrich our fields and crown them with plenty.

Compare your condition with that of the children of Poland. Their fathers are banished from their country, or are slaves on the soil which gave them birth. Their houses are not peaceful and happy homes, but are open to the spies and soldiers of a cruel and revengeful government. They are liable to be taken day or night, and cast into dungeons, or sent to the frozen regions of Siberia. There is no confidence, no repose, no hope for them; and will

not be, till, by some more fortunate struggle, they shall drive the Russians from their borders, and become an independent people.

Remember, then, the blessings you enjoy as the children of a free nation. Be grateful to Providence that your lot has fallen in such pleasant places. Grow up in the thought that you are among kind friends, and dwell in happy homes. And when the day comes, in which you will yourselves mingle in the active affairs of life, remember that the blessings you have received you are to impart, and that other and distant nations have claims upon your warmest sympathy.

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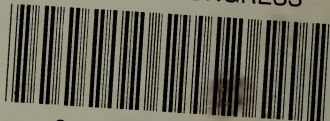


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